

THE GULL



EARTHWATCH PROGRAMS: CAPUCHINS TO MOUNTAIN LIONS

Mountain lions, monkeys and Red-billed Gulls will be the stars of our monthly November program in Berkeley. Earthwatch field representative, Claire Nelson, will present a slide show of her adventures as an Earthwatch volunteer at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 10th, at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

Imagine tracking mountain lions by radio transmission for 12 days in southern Idaho, sleeping on foam pads under the stars, climbing steep mountain ranges, all the while following and plotting the location of lions through transmitters on their collars. This study examined the effects of habitat fragmentation on these large predators. Next, switching venues to Costa Rica, Ms. Nelson found herself in the tropical forest, helping to unravel the social behavior of white-faced capuchin monkeys in response to human-altered habitat. The results of this project will help guide reforestation efforts to provide habitat for monkeys and other tropical wildlife. In January, Ms. Nelson will be globe-trotting to the southern hemisphere to assist in a Red-billed Gull population study. She will also show slides of this upcoming expedition to New Zealand's Kaikoura Peninsula.

(continued on next page)

NATIONAL AUDUBON COMES TO TOWN

The Board of Directors of National Audubon along with much of the staff met in San Francisco back in early September. Despite all their good works, they're the folks we love to carp about: they exist in the ether of New York and they don't understand the problems of the local chapters. So it was a valuable opportunity to meet face-to-face and learn a bit about each other. We'll be covering some of the issues and personalities in the months to come, but one of the more interesting agenda items was the discussion of the results of a Roper Survey that National Audubon commissioned last summer.

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Kenya Safaria • Christmas Counts

Breeding Bird Atlases from Marin and Monterey

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- 1 – SF Conservation Committee
Call office for location
- 10 – General Meeting: **Earthwatch Programs: Capuchins to Mountain Lions**, 7:30 p.m., Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. Please note that this is **WEDNESDAY** night.
- 15 – East Bay Conservation Committee, GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.
- 29 – Board of Directors
GGAS Office, 7:30 p.m.



EARTHWATCH PROGRAM

(continued)

Earthwatch is a non-profit institution that sponsors field research by finding paying volunteers to help scientists on research expeditions around the world. Since its founding in 1971, Earthwatch has manned 1381 projects in 111 countries and 36 states with over 32,000 volunteers. Claire Nelson has been affiliated with Earthwatch since 1988. Members and non-members alike are invited to this far-flung exploration and inspirational program. Who knows . . . it may give you some ideas for your next summer vacation.

—JOELLE BUFFA

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, November 6—Birds of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park. Leader: Alan Ridley (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, November 10—Mini-trip to Aquatic Park, Berkeley. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

For details on the above, see *The Gull* for October.

Saturday, November 13—Hayward Regional Shoreline. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking area beyond the gate at the end of West Winton Ave. in Hayward for about four hours of birding. This location is alive with shorebirds, ducks and grebes. There are also grassland species to be seen. Dress warmly and bring a scope if you have one. Lunch is optional. Leader: David George (510) 339-0765 (✓).

Sunday, November 21—Palo Alto Baylands. Meet at 8:30 a.m. Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto. Exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and Bayland Nature Center. After entering the Refuge meet in the parking lot on the right just before the Duck Pond. (The Duck Pond is on the left, beyond the Palo Alto Airport turnoff.) Bring lunch, scopes, and clothes for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds, rails, and possibly burrowing owls. Leader: Bob Hirt (408) 446-4478 (✓).

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

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Saturday and Sunday, November 27-28—Gray Lodge and Sacramento Wildlife Refuges. For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. in parking lot #14 at Gray Lodge.

Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to Route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on Route 99 to the town of Gridley. Turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy. and continue five miles to Pennington Rd. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge. Proceed through the checking station (entrance fee), and continue to parking lot #14.

We will caravan through the Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, and through the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge on Sunday.

On Sunday, we will meet at 9 a.m. in the visitors' parking lot at the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. From I-5 take the Norman Rd. exit (just north of the Glenn Co. Line), and follow signs to the refuge.

Allow two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. (AAA map of Sacramento Valley Region is helpful.) For accommodations the Blue Gum Willows Motel off I-5 at Willows (916) 934-5401 is suggested (there is no lodge at Gray Lodge), and camping is possible at the State Park in Colusa. Bring lunch, scopes, and clothes appropriate for the valley in November (chilly). Heavy rain cancels trip. Leaders: Steve and Rene Margolin (415) 954-1623 \$ (✓).

Saturday, December 4—Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas. Meet at 9 a.m. in Monterey at the foot of Coast Guard Pier. We will bird this area then drive north, stopping at various spots including Moss Landing. We will be looking for loons, grebes, gulls, alcids, and rocky coastline species. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leader: Don Starks (408) 226-4134 (eve.) (✓).

Wednesday, December 8—Mini-trip to Lake Merritt, Oakland. Meet at the Rotary Science Center at 9:30 a.m. Go east on Grand Ave., cross Harrison St. and turn right on Bellevue Ave. to Lake Merritt. Continue to the Rotary Science Center on the right - just beyond the duck pond. This is a good opportunity to review waterfowl. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee,

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (510) 524-2399.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

CHRISTMAS COUNT

Christmas is coming! For many birders, high points of the season are the GGAS Christmas Bird Counts.



These days in the field present wonderful opportunities to see plenty of birds, meet some delightful people and, just incidently, collect and contribute valuable information on what we know about Bay Area birds. This year the Oakland CBC will be held on Sunday, December 19, 1993; the San Francisco CBC will be held on Tuesday, December 28. Information and sign-up forms will be mailed to recent participants during the first week of November. To have your name added to the CBC mailing list, call the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

—KAY LOUGHMAN
Compiler, Oakland CBC

SEPTEMBER OBSERVATIONS

After a dry spring, and we're not talking weather here, the fall has been a veritable cloudburst with vagrants practically falling out of the sky. More than "practically" actually when you think about the mechanics of bird movement. It's interesting to look at the warbler chart, a dry bit of pedantry which manages to be instructive in spite of itself. Even when it's not immediately evident by the location, the bulk of these birds was found along the coast which says more about the techniques for successful searching for unusual migrants than it does about migration patterns in general, although there is scarcely anything scientific about all of this surmise.

Warblers, along with most other landbirds, migrate at night, settling down to rest and refuel when daylight arrives. A given number of these birds find themselves over open ocean when day breaks and unless severely misprogrammed instinctively look for the nearest landfall. This could be within sight; if it isn't, observers have noted that most birds will turn around and head back in the direction from which they came. Evolutionary instinct isn't dumb — better the known than the depths. (Keeping in mind of course that this is untrue for many eastern migrants whose journeys involve flights of more than 24 hours over open water.) The result of this all is that there tends to be a greater concentration of migrants right along the coast than there would be in many comparable areas inland. The connoisseur of the hunt looks for days with southerly breezes and mid to high overcast; heavy fog makes it difficult for the birds to see the shore and the watchers to see the birds; and unmitigated sun allows the birds to

disperse over a wider area once they reach land. During periods of peak migration when conditions are propitious, isolated groups of trees near the shore can yield astonishing numbers and varieties of birds. Again, this doesn't mean there aren't equal or greater numbers and varieties elsewhere; it's just that they're easier to find in these natural concentration spots. So that's where people look, which of course reinforces the results, etc., etc. Finding birds is really just a matter of going out and looking, but looking with forethought can certainly be an improvement.

* * *

There were plenty of seabirds this month, as there generally are in September. One Black-footed Albatross, forty miles off the Monterey shore, was a good find for this season (DLSh); they are scarcest in fall when other pelagic species are here in such abundance. That same offshore trip on the 26th produced fourteen Long-tailed Jaegers and two South Polar Skuas (DLSh). A total of three Flesh-footed Shearwaters (fide JiD, DLSh, JBo), three to four Wilson's Storm-Petrels (HK, DSg, DLSh, JBo, SBT), five Least Storm-Petrels (DLSh, SBT) and ten Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels (DLSh, HK, JLD) were reported from Monterey Bay during the month. There was a titillating report of a Streaked Shearwater on the 18th (BGE fide DLSh), but the photographs have not yet been reviewed so presumably the jury is still out.

Further to last month's report of two possible Townsend's/Newell's Shearwaters in Monterey Bay and another off S. E. Farallon, the video, slides and black-and-white photos were examined and all the individuals (the first three plus a fourth reported on the 22nd

(JLD) from Monterey Bay) were declared to be **Manx Shearwaters**, the first documented records for California. This is more complicated than it seems: up until the early 80's there were scads of "Manx" Shearwaters on the west coast, but then the AOU split the Manx into two separate species and our version became the Black-vented Shearwater, a not-quite-so-black bird with dark vent and undertail coverts. There have been a couple of confirmed records of Manx Shearwater (the eastern version) from off-shore Washington in recent years, but until now California has been unable to produce an acceptable (to the Bird Records Committee) sighting. Some consideration is now being given to the possibility that the Manx Shearwater, previously thought to breed only in the Atlantic, may breed somewhere in the Pacific: it's hard to fathom that all at once these birds are coming around Cape Horn and making their way north. I suspect we'll be hearing more about this as time goes on.

The **Brown Booby** continued to be seen on S. E. Farallon (PRBO). A female **Magnificent Frigatebird** was headed north off Santa Cruz on the 22nd (DR). At least one Little Blue Heron remained at Alviso (MMR) where there were also ten Cattle Egrets on the 1st (MiF). Moderate numbers of White-faced Ibis, migrating, turned up in all kinds of unexpected places near the coast: Salinas River mouth, Abbotts Lagoon, and the San Jose sewer ponds among others (mob). The first Eurasian Wigeon of the season was at Mountain View/Palo Alto shoreline from the 23rd to the 26th (MMR, TG). The Harlequin Duck continued to be seen at Point Reyes (mob); an Oldsquaw was there on the 26th (ShH).

Black Vultures breed in western Mexico and they are regulars in

southern Arizona; they also breed in the southeastern U.S. and have strayed up the Atlantic coast as far as Nova Scotia. However, two prior California records (Chico in 1971 and Parker Dam in 1977) were not accepted because of questions about the origin of the birds: because at some point in history they have been kept in captivity, all sightings become suspect since they might be escaped birds or descendants of escapees. On the 19th, a **Black Vulture** appeared in Arcata (JCS, mob) where it seems to have settled in, at least temporarily. All the old arguments will undoubtedly be heard again, but there's always a chance that the thinking will go the other way this time.

A total of fifty-five Broad-winged Hawks were reported, mostly from the Marin Headlands (mob) where there was a Swainson's Hawk on the 25th (JLD).

Shorebirds didn't provide too many surprises, but there were a few goodies: **Bar-tailed Godwit** in Humboldt County on the 5th (JBo, TEa); five Stilt Sandpipers in Del Norte County on the 4th (JBo, TEa) and one each in Mendocino and Humboldt counties on the 9th and 21st (DT, JCS); single Buff-breasted Sandpipers in Santa Clara, Monterey and Marin counties and two in Del Norte County (SRo, JBo, TEa, HD, PDeL); and a total of eight Ruffs, seven from the South Bay south and one in Del Norte (mob).

A pair of Black Skimmers was a surprise on the 4th at the Salinas River mouth (AD) where they cozied up to the Elegant Terns. Two separate **Thick-billed Murres** were seen in Monterey Bay between the 19th and 28th (DLSh, JBo, JLD).

Six White-winged Doves were reported from Del Norte south to the Salinas River mouth (mob). Marin County had a mini-invasion of Lewis' Woodpeckers: five in Novato (KW);

three near Stinson Beach (KH); and one in Nicasio (RS). And there was the usual assortment of *empidonax* fly-catchers: six Willow, three Least, four Dusky and two Gray (mob). There was great excitement at Point Reyes on the 25th when a **Sulphur-bellied Fly-catcher** was discovered (CWo, JM), the first record for the region. This is generally a target bird for visitors to southeastern Arizona, the northern-most edge of the bird's range which extends south to Costa Rica. The same day, Marin County became Vagrant Flycatcher Heaven when a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** showed up in Nicasio (JB). A must-see for anyone who has ever paged through the field guide and made a wish list, this individual has quite a long tail and might be an adult. It still remained at the end of the month.

A very scruffy thrasher at the Salinas sewer ponds from the 3rd to the 5th could easily have been the quiz bird from hell: tentatively identified as a Curve-billed Thrasher at first, it was later determined to be a **Bendire's Thrasher**, a first Monterey County record, although there were still some grumblings from a few observers who thought otherwise (JMa, JM, mob).

It's **Red-throated Pipit** time again: four at Point Reyes (SBT, RHs) and one on S. E. Farallon (PRBO). S. E. Farallon also boasted the first two island records of Bell's Vireo on the 15th and 18th/19th (PRBO). Even in its normal range, Philadelphia Vireo is considered a hard-to-find bird and years go by around here without one putting in an appearance, but this year there have been three: Bodega Bay (DN), Andrew Molera State Park (NiL), and Pescadero (CM, RSTh). At the same time, there were four Red-eyed Vireos: S. E. Farallon (PRBO), San Francisco (ASH), Coyote Hills (RJR), and Pescadero (JCS, GjH, mob).



The list of warblers makes up a bit for the spring dearth. This is certainly the time when Palm Warblers show up, but this year's numbers seem unprecedented.

WARBLERS

BLUE-WINGLED WARBLER			
1	9/14	Andrew Molera S.O.	CHO, DR
1	9/27	Carmel River	RS, DR
TENNESSEE WARBLER			
3 total	9/10-10/4	San Francisco	DPM, MMC, DSG, ASH
9 total	9/14-22	Point Reyes	RS, SBT, mob
4 total	8/29-9/29	S.E. Farallon	PRBO
6 total	9/16-28	San Mateo Coast	RSTh, BS
5 total	9/18-10/2	Monterey County	JMR, NiL, SBT, RS, CHo
1	9/18	Bodega Bay	DN
1, 1	9/25, 30	Stinson/Bolinas	KH, DWi
NASHVILLE WARBLER			
1, 1	9/16, 21	Bodega Bay	DN
VIRGINIA'S WARBLER			
1	9/2	Andrew Molera S.P.	CHo
3 total	9/15-30	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
2 total	9/19-23	San Mateo Coast	NiL, BS, CM
LUCY'S WARBLER			
1	9/5	Carmel River	DR
1	9/19	Pescadero	RSTh
NORTHERN PARULA			
1	10/3	Bodega Bay	DN
CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER			
3 total	9/5-10/3	San Mateo Coast	BS, RSTh
1	9/5	Bodega Bay	BDP
1, 1	9/6, 29	Marin County	JiD, LSi
4 total	9/12-10/3	Monterey County	SBT, fide RC, RS, DR, GjH

1	9/12	Mt. San Bruno	MMC
4 total	9/18-10/4	San Francisco	MLa, MMC, ASH, BJ PRBO
1	9/23	S. E. Farallon	
1	10/3	Santa Cruz County	GjH

MAGNOLIA WARBLER

1, 1	9/8, 10/3	San Mateo Coast	BS fide RSTh, RSTh SBT PRBO
1	9/16	Monterey	
4 total	9/16-30	S. E. Farallon	DS, DSh DHo, DN ASH
1, 1	9/18, 29	Marin County	
1	10/3	Bodega Bay	
1	10/3	San Francisco	

CAPE MAY WARBLER

1	9/21	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1	9/23	Pescadero	RSTh

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER

4 total	9/10-18	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1	9/14	Arcata	DF
1	9/20	San Mateo Coast	BS fide RSTh
2	9/24	Bolinas	KH, CAx
1	9/26-28	Carmel River	KB, RS, DR
1	10/2	Point Reyes	BCh

PRAIRIE WARBLER

1	9/1	San Francisco	DPM
2	9/18	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1	9/24	Bodega Bay	ChW fide DN
2 total	9/25-27	Monterey County	SBT, DR, JCS

PALM WARBLER

11 total	9/14-10/3	San Francisco	JMR, JSC, BJ, ASH, DPM, JM
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42 total	9/14-10/3	Point Reyes	mob
16 total	9/17-10/3	San Mateo Coast	SBT, RSTh, BRI, CM
6 total	9/20-10/2	Marin County	MPI, KH, RS, RMS

2 total	9/21-10/3	Humboldt County	JCS, JM
1	9/23	Coyote Creek	SRo
5 total	9/25-10/3	Bodega Bay	DN, DHo
25 total	9/25-10/3	Monterey County	mob
1	9/28	Hayward Shoreline	RJR, SGI
44 total	9/10-30	S. E. Farallon	PRBO

BLACKPOLL WARBLER

1	9/6	Humboldt County	JBo, TEa
11 total	9/12-10/3	San Mateo Coast	RSTh, SBT, BS, JCS, CM

1, 1	9/14, 18	San Francisco	ASH, DSg
6 total	9/15-10/3	Point Reyes	RS, KF, DSh, BCh

7 total	9/3-30	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1-2	9/18-27	Andrew Molera S.P.	NI, L, JCS
1	9/22	Albany	HG
1	9/22	Alviso	SRo
1	9/26	San Rafael	KW
1	10/3	Bodega Bay	DHo, DN

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER

5 total	9/5-10/3	Monterey County	mob
2 total	9/1-13	S. E. Farallon	PRBO

3 total	9/15-10/3	Point Reyes	RS, KF, DSh, BCh
1, 2	9/15, 30	San Mateo Coast	RSTh, CM
1	9/19	Marin Headlands	GG

AMERICAN REDSTART

7 total	9/4-18	San Francisco	mob
5 total	9/4-26	Bodega Bay	EHa, DN, BDP, DSh
9 total	9/5-25	Point Reyes	DSh, RS, DDeS, KH, RHs, FGB, ALE
6 total	9/6-10/3	San Mateo Coast	DSg, BS, SBT, JM, RSTh
1	9/11	Alviso	SRo
4 total	9/14-28	Monterey County	CHi, DR, NiL, RS
8 total	8/29-9/30	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1	9/16	Bolinas	KH

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER

1	9/11	San Francisco	MH
1	9/18-19	Andrew Molera S.P.	fide NiL
1	9/26-10/2	Pescadero	RSTh

OVENBIRD

1	9/19	Moss Beach	JHI
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NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH

1	9/10	Half Moon Bay	BS fide RSTh
4 total	9/12-9/27	Carmel River	SBT, DR, fide RC, RS
1	9/14	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
1	9/18-19	Bodega Bay	DN
1	9/19	Walnut Creek	SpI

KENTUCKY WARBLER

1	9/13	S. E. Farallon	PRBO
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CONNECTICUT WARBLER

1	9/15	S. E. Farallon	fide KH
2 total	9/27-10/2	Monterey County	JCS fide DR, CHo

MOURNING WARBLER

2 total	9/15-10/1	Stinson/Bolinas	KH, fide SW
1	10/1	S. E. Farallon	fide KH
1	10/2-3	Rodeo Lagoon	JM

HOODED WARBLER

1	8/22-9/18	Bodega Bay	DHo, mob
1	9/18	Point Reyes	DOg

CANADA WARBLER

1	9/6	Humboldt Bay	JBo, TEa
1	9/12	San Francisco	DSg
1	9/28	Hayward	RJR, SGI

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

1	9/4	Bodega Bay	EHa, DN
1	9/12	Monterey	SBT
1	9/15	Coyote Creek	SRo

Somehow, after warblers, everything else seems anti-climactic, although that isn't really the case. There were seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (mob) and an Indigo Bunting (RS). There were Green-tailed Towhees in San Francisco

(RF) and at Andrew Molera State Park (CHo). Sparrows included ten Clay-colored (mob); two Brewer's (RS, RJR); a Black-chinned on S. E. Farallon, only the second island record and the first since 1972 (PRBO); four Vesper (SBT, RSTh, JM, DDeS); five Black-throated (PRBO, RS); and the first Swamp and White-throateds of the season. Bobolinks were abundant: a total of eighteen reported (mob). Three Orchard Orioles (SBT, DR, RJR) and lots (or at least some) Red Crossbills round out the month.

OBSERVERS: Chuck Alexander, Jim Booker, Florence G. Bennett, Ken Burton, Rita Caratello, Bill Chilson, Byron Colborn, Terry Colborn, J. Scott Cox, Jim Danzenbaker (JiD), Pierre DeLaestre, Dave DeSante, Ann Dewart, Hugh Dingle, Lily Douglas, Jon L. Dunn (JLD), Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Arthur L. Edward, Bruce G. Elliott, Carter Faust, Mike Feighner, David Fix, Kathy Francone, Reid Freeman, Steve Glover, Tom Gray, Helen Green, George Griffeth, Keith Hansen, Roger Harshaw, Ed Hase, Shawn Hayes, Gjon Hazard, Mike Healy, David Hofmann, Craig Hohenberger, Alan S. Hopkins, John Hully, Bill Jones, Howard King, Michael Larkin, Nick Lethaby, John Mariani (JMa), Mac McCormick, Carol Miller, Joe Morlan (JM), Dan P. Murphy, Dan Nelson, Doug Oglesby, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Suzanne Pirkle, Marjorie Plant, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Peter Pyle, Bob Reiling, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Mike M. Rogers, Steve Rotterborn, Ruth A. Rudesill, Barry Sauppe, Doug Shaw, Debra L. Shearwater, Dave Shuford (DS), Dianne Sierra (DSi), Larry Silver, Dan Singer (DSg), Jean-Marie Spoelman, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling, Robert M. Steward, Scott B. Terrill, Ron S. Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin,

Sophie Webb, Kaynor Weishaupt, Denise Wight, Chris Wood. Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Rare Bird Alert.

—ANN DEWART

NATIONAL AUDUBON COMES TO TOWN *(continued)*

Now it's evident (or at least we thought it was) that many members don't think much about Audubon beyond paying their dues, shuffling through *Audubon* magazine to take a look at the pictures, and maybe reading the cover story in the monthly newsletter now and then. Roper interviewed fifteen hundred people (760 current members, 501 lapsed members and 250 prospective members) for an average of 25 minutes apiece, an astounding figure right there. They were interested in assessing the impact of the recession and the Clinton election on declining membership; in measuring perceived changes in NAS policy and *Audubon* magazine; and in evaluating membership renewal strategies.

They reached a number of interesting conclusions:

- the Clinton election has caused a decline in membership as people assume that with a sympathetic White House, the environmental fight does not need to be fought so hard; but a far more serious reason for non-renewal is the hard-pressed economy and general economizing and cutting back on the part of many people.
- among environmental organizations, Audubon remains one of the best known and most highly regarded, in part because of its educational role in keeping members informed and furthering their knowledge of environmental issues and in part because of NAS's advocacy role in protecting birds, other wildlife and the environment in general. Prospective members, when comparing Audubon to the Sierra Club and National Wildlife Federation, viewed it as the most credible, the most bird oriented, the most education oriented and the most academic.

• *Audubon* magazine is viewed as the principal benefit of membership which gives it great importance as an educational tool. Interestingly, most people recognized that there had been changes in the magazine and most approved, much to the chagrin of those of us who continue to be displeased (with the look rather than the content, let it be said).

• 60% of the members read their chapter newsletters.

• the average age of the membership is mid-50's which is fine, but there seems to be a dearth of new, younger members and that is cause for concern.

• 5% of those whose membership had been expired for 2 years or longer thought they were still members; and 2% of those who had never joined thought they were current members.

So, who knows if it all means anything, but it certainly is interesting.

—ANN DEWART

CHICKADEES

Has anyone else in Berkeley noticed a decline in Chickadees? One of our seed feeders has noticed such a decline.



GRATITUDE

Many thanks to Mr. R. L. Smith who heard our pleas and came forth with a 386 personal computer. We're grateful and gearing up for our entrance into the high-tech world.

SAFARI IN KENYA

Join Alan Hopkins, GGAS Board member, field trip leader and bird photographer, on a 17-day safari in Kenya next summer. Alan will be joined by an experienced guide from Park East Tours and together we will tour some of the premier birding and wildlife viewing areas of Kenya. Our itinerary goes far beyond the usual tourist haunts and is designed to cover a wide range of habitats: savannah, coastal woodland, beach, mangrove swamps, fresh-water swamps, dry woodland, mountain forest and lake. African birds are among the most colorful and easily identified in the world, making Kenya a birdwatcher's paradise. We can expect to see 300 to 400 species total and in some areas may see 100 species in a single morning!

We plan to go in July/August, 1994, the coolest time of the year in Kenya and ideal for wildlife viewing. We have an excellent chance of catching the wildebeest migration in the Masai Mara, and the rains are over so birds and mammals are easy to spot as they concentrate around sources of water. Areas to be visited include the North and South Coast, Tsavo, Amboseli, Samburu, the Aberderes, Lake Naivasha, the Masai Mara and Nairobi.

We would like to have your input on which dates within this time period would be best for you. To get more information and to let us know your preferences, please call Alan Hopkins at (415) 664-0983; or Marcia or Tasha at Park East Tours: 1-800-223-6078.

Total cost is \$4,100.00 which includes round-trip air-fare from S.F. A percentage of each person's costs will go to support GGAS's conservation and education programs. Please join us on this exciting adventure.



THE MARIN COUNTY BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

*A Distributional and Natural History
of Coastal California Birds*

by W. David Shuford

A Project of Point Reyes Bird Observatory

A guide to the ecology and natural history of Marin County using the Breeding Bird Atlas Project as the basis of organization. Each of 163 species accounts includes ecological requirements, Marin breeding distribution and historical trends and population threats. The 77-page introduction contains a wealth of background information on bird distribution and breeding habitats as well as a history of land use in Marin County. An extensive bibliography (30 pages), mainly journal articles, makes this an invaluable reference work.

Illustrations by Keith Hansen and Ane Rovetta. Photographs by Ian Tait.

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*Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society proudly
announces its latest publication:*

“The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Monterey County”

Edited by Don Roberson & Chris Tenney



The Atlas features breeding distribution maps for 178 native and feral birds in Monterey County, based on a five-year field project from 1988-1992. Species accounts include summaries of local range, habitat, history, breeding biology, and conservation concerns, and is illustrated with the work of 14 artists (Flammulated Owl by Sophie Webb). The species accounts were written by six authors: Don Roberson, Chris Tenney, Stephen F. Bailey, Brian J. Weed, Rita Carratello, and Robert F. Tintle. This timely 448 page publication is a must have for every Central California birder and is available in soft cover for \$24.00 and hardcover for \$51.00; price includes tax and shipping. To order make your check payable to:

MPAS

PO Box 985

Pacific Grove, CA 93950

BACK YARD BIRDER

I'm always happy to see "my" Hermit Thrush return from its summer breeding grounds to spend the winter in my yard, adding to the balance of nature by scouring for beetles and ants, crickets, caterpillars, sow bugs and snails. It also enjoys earthworms but I need them in my adobe soil. The Hermit Thrush has an endearing expression with its large, dark eyes. It's always moving, flicking its wings and raising and lowering its rusty tail after alighting. If I don't see it, I hear its liquid "chuck" notes. If you're lucky, in spring you may hear it warming up its ethereal breeding song. This begins with a clear, flutelike note which is followed with bell-like tones rising and falling before fading away. Instead of hopping, the Hermit runs on long pink legs.

There are 13 species of thrushes in North America and another 6 to 8 have been recorded as accidental stragglers. In California we have a nice cross section of family members:

- The Hermit Thrush visits us in winter in the Bay Area. It is found on the north coast year-round and breeds in the northern mountains as well as the Sierra Nevada.
- The American Robin, recognized by nearly everyone, is a resident.
- The Western Bluebird can be found year-round in the Bay Area and also winters in the Central Valley.
- The Swainson's Thrush is a summer breeder along the coast and in northern California. Listen for its beautiful song which spirals upward in a haunting way.
- The Varied Thrush visits us in winter, sometimes in large numbers and scarcely at all in other years. In the far north coast corner they are year-round residents.

- The Townsend's Solitaire is a year-round bird in the Sierra. I suppose in cold winters it might be found in the Bay Area.

- The Mountain Bluebird is found—guess where? It visits the Central Valley in wintertime.

Almost all thrushes, in the Old World as well as the New, have melodious voices and many are veritable virtuosos (Veery, Hermit and Wood thrushes). The Nightingale is, not surprisingly, a thrush family member.

There is so much variety among these family members that it's hard to distinguish them except for a general thrush shape. That is the shape that most people would draw if asked to draw a bird. Thrush size can range from 4½" to 13"; color ranges from browns and grays, some spotted or streaked, to brilliant colors of blue or orange with bold patterns; bills can be unusually short to medium in length and can be thick or thin; tails, wings and legs vary greatly in length. See what I mean? With all this variation you would expect their habitats to vary widely as well—and you'd be right! They live in barren, stony tundra (Northern Wheatear) to rain forest (Varied Thrush) to woodland edge and woodland. There are no desert thrushes, however.

Thrush nests are, like their shape, what people imagine a nest to be: a neat cup of sticks and grasses woven together and lined with soft, fine plant fibres, sometimes with mud interlining. Bluebirds do not fit the norm. They are cavity-dwelling birds. You probably know that the European Starlings are grabbing up nesting cavities in trees, causing a decline in bluebirds as well as other birds like woodpeckers. Luckily, bluebirds will use nest boxes, many of which have been put up in our area—and are used. In North America all thrush eggs are blue.

The sight of robins on a lawn, frozen in place with head cocked to one side is familiar to all. For years it was assumed that the birds were listening for worms, but experiments showed that the birds *see* the earthworm as it burrows. With their eyes on the sides of their heads, they must cock their heads to find dinner. Another myth was recently exploded after a study pronounced that robins and other birds do not get drunk on fermented berries. Instead, they apparently just can't say "no" and overeat, becoming so heavy they cannot fly properly and carom in front of cars and into windows.

Don't confuse the Hermit Thrush with the similarly-colored Fox Sparrow, another handsome winter visitor to our yards. The Hermit stands on long legs while the Fox Sparrow scratches in the dirt and leaves by jumping back and forth with both feet. Foxie has a sparrow's chunky bill rather than the Hermit's sharp beak. Hermie has spots on its breast while Foxie is more streaked. The Fox Sparrow in my yard is a richer, darker brown than the Hermit Thrush. If you're not a fastidious gardener, both of these birds will love the delicacies hiding under leaves and shrubs. Look for the quiet, somewhat shy thrush as well as the energetic sparrow. Both are handsome.

—MEG PAULETICH

FOR THE GULL

Do you have computer scanning capabilities? You could be the one to help improve the image of our newsletter! *The GULL* needs a volunteer who is capable of doing good quality, high resolution scans of line art for drawings and halftones for photographs to appear in *The GULL* publication. If you can provide this service for either PC or Mac, please call the office.

TOO MULTITUDINOUS FOR WORDS

Living Within Limits: Ecology, Economics, and Population

Taboos

by Garrett Hardin

311 pp. New York & Oxford:

Oxford University Press

\$25.00

By the time you finish reading this book review a couple of minutes from now, the population of the only world we know will have increased by 323 people. If you think world population is not Audubon's problem and certainly not your problem, and you quit reading right now after perhaps five seconds, world population will have increased by some 10 to 15 people in any case. Sorry, you cannot escape.

Garrett Hardin, emeritus professor of human ecology at Santa Barbara, has written a thoroughly engaging exploration of the mathematical, philosophical, political and biological aspects of our ever-burgeoning population problem. The 311 pages are broken up into short essays, almost quarter-hour lectures, making this a good book for commute time or postprandial consumption. The discourse jumps from the present to Epicurus to Malthus to Keynes to Darwin to Adam Smith to Locke to Freeman Dyson back to Darwin to Bacon to John Stuart Mill ("of his own free will") to Saint Aldo Leopold, with lots of stops at Hardin along the way.

Be prepared for the skewering of sacred cows of all political stripes, as Hardin takes on one cherished dream after another. No, Virginia, we cannot ship our problems off to a colony on another world (only people who could accept restrictions on their breeding behavior during the long space voyage could be allowed to go, leaving behind on earth the ones most likely to continue breeding beyond the carrying capacity);

there is no such thing as continuous creation of wealth (it is a variation on the dream of a perpetual motion machine); and feeding the hungry of the world does not decrease their fertility (the effect tends to be the opposite, resulting in greater suffering, just deferred to a later date). While mainstream economists take a lot of flak, the likes of Planned Parenthood and various purveyors of multiculturalism are hardly unscathed. You are left with the realization that "liberal" and "conservative" should have very different meanings in a world informed by the principles of ecology.

There is much here to make most anyone uncomfortable, because the lessons of thermodynamics, natural selection, and other "default" propositions of science leave little room for dog-good liberalism on which many of us were raised. But this is not, at the end, a dismal book. Hardin repeatedly quotes Nobel prize winner and inventor of holography Dennis Gabor, who taught that "The future cannot be predicted, but futures can be invented." Hardin does not divulge the secret solution to controlling human population, but *Living within Limits* invites us all to a higher plane of discussion of the inescapable.

—STEVE MARGOLIN



To Our GGAS Friends:

Les and I have sold our house in Alameda and we've given away most of our furniture and clothes. Our field guides and hiking boots and spotting scope are packed into our Volkswagen van. We've set out on an adventure we've planned for a long time: to travel around the North American continent until we find a place we want to live for a few years.

In making plans and considering places, I've corresponded with Audubon members in other chapters. They have all sent me newsletters, extolled the virtues of their area and invited us to visit. There seems to be something about Audubon that attracts people like that.

My introduction to GGAS was in 1978. I had the good fortune to sign up for a Vista College course in Bay and Shore birds lead by Paul Covell. He provided a wonderful introduction to the natural resources of the area to which we had moved.

Over the years, Audubon has provided some of my most memorable experiences. Membership in the Conservation Committee helped me hone my political skills and provided enormous amounts of information with which I could impress my boss, an environmental attorney. Leora Feeney has given me an opportunity to feed Burrowing Owls and to band their young. She has also helped to provide the most memorable Christmas seasons of my adult life.

So with Edwin Way Teale's travel books and Annie Dillard's philosophy tucked in with our field guides, we set out on a birder's trip through the U.S. and Mexico.

Thanks to GGAS for giving us some background for this trip.

—JENISE AND LES PORTER

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244
 Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970
 Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education
 under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin
 and Sequoia Audubon Societies

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Annual Appeal

Audubon Canyon Ranch is your system of sanctuaries, and each year at this time we ask for your financial support. ACR is an independent, non-profit corporation which receives no support from the National Audubon Society. We are therefore dependent on the generosity of our supporters and the hard work and wisdom of our staff and volunteers to assure our fiscal stability.

Audubon members founded ACR in an effort to preserve the heronry at Bolinas Lagoon. Since then we have been instrumental in preserving not only the heronry, but the lagoon itself, Tomales Bay and a portion of the Sonoma hills. In reaching out to Tomales Bay we have preserved critical habitat, and have developed a major research program there. We met the challenge of expanding to Sonoma County, and now we are a major conservation and education presence there. Our education programs are acclaimed worldwide. Our success in preservation and education made such impressions on Clifford Conly and David Bouverie that each of these very generous gentlemen established ACR preserves. Clifford and David have each provided leadership, guidance and resources which have continued to enable ACR to develop. But they are only two of the many donors, both large and small, whose contributions have enabled ACR to become such a successful organization.

It is certainly true that we continually seek your help and involvement in

ACR. In addition to our employees, about 700 volunteers make ACR work. We serve as weekend hosts, docents and guides, researchers, maintenance workers, advisors and board members. As always there are ways for you to volunteer. But it is with our financial needs that we ask your help now.

November is the month in which you should receive a letter announcing our annual appeal. Whether you receive it or not, please consider a contribution to Audubon Canyon Ranch. The problem of increasing expenses and limited income creates an immense challenge to our development, finance and budget committees. That challenge is to increase donations, get the most from our investments, and reduce spending. Yet, the operation and maintenance of three major preserves and a number of smaller properties is ongoing and increasing.

Please help ACR continue to be a leader in conservation, preservation, education and research. Send your tax deductible contribution to Audubon Canyon Ranch, at 4900 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

Fall Seminars

Please register in advance for all seminars and workdays by calling (415) 868-9244.

Saturday, November 6, at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Remember, it's the proverbial free lunch for those who join our crew of workers at the Ranch. Just call (415) 868-9244, to let us know you're coming so we can plan your lunch.

Saturday or Sunday, November 6 or 7. "Keeping a Nature Journal" at the Bouverie Preserve with Mark Baldwin of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History (\$30). Learn to sharpen your field skills and record your observations in a journal in this very special one-day seminar.

Saturday, November 20. “Monarchs!” at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with Ray Peterson. (\$30). Ray will tell you all the secrets of the Monarch Butterflies and their migration except just how they manage to return to wintering areas several generations after their ancestors migrated the previous spring.

Saturday, January, 15. “Coastal Prairie Restoration Day” at Cypress Grove Preserve. It’s time to help replant native bunch grasses at Tomales Bay with our ACR staff. It’s FREE, but do register.

Bouverie Preserve Guided Nature Walks

Saturdays, Nov. 13, Dec. 11 and Jan. 22; 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Enjoy the rich beauty of the Bouverie Audubon Preserve on one of these free guided nature walks. Reservations are taken as early as the beginning of the month preceding the walk of your choice. Call (707) 938-4554 to reserve your place.

—DAN MURPHY

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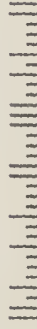
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As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The GULL*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.



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